

# Rumsen language

The **Rumsen language** (also known as **Rumsien**, *San Carlos Costanoan* and *Carmeleno*) is one of eight Ohlone languages, historically spoken by the Rumsen people of Northern California. The Rumsen language was spoken from the Pajaro River to Point Sur, and on the lower courses of the Pajaro, as well as on the Salinas and Carmel Rivers, and the region of the present-day cities of Salinas, Monterey and Carmel.

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## History

One of eight languages within the Ohlone branch of the Utian family, it became one of two important native languages spoken at the Mission San Carlos Borroméo de Carmelo founded in 1770, the other being the Esselein language.

The last fluent speaker of Rumsen was Isabel Meadows,<sup>[1]</sup> who died in 1939. The Bureau of American Ethnology linguist John Peabody Harrington conducted very extensive fieldwork with Meadows in the last several years of her life. These notes, still mostly unpublished, now constitute the foundation for current linguistic research and revitalization efforts on the Rumsen language.<sup>[1]</sup> The Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe has been in the process of reestablishing their language. They have begun efforts to teach their tribal members Rumsen and are working to complete a revised English - Rumsen Dictionary. The Rumsen website can be found at [www.costanoanrumsen.org](http://www.costanoanrumsen.org).

## Rumsen-speaking tribes

Dialects of the Rumsen language were spoken by four independent local tribes, including the *Rumsen* themselves, the *Ensen* of the Salinas vicinity, the *Calendaruc* of the central shoreline of Monterey Bay, and the *Sargentaruc* of the Big Sur Coast. The territory of the language group was bordered by Monterey Bay and

<b>Rumsen</b>	
San Carlos	
<b>Native to</b>	United States
<b>Region</b>	California
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Rumsen people
<b>Extinct</b>	1939, with the death of Isabel Meadows <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	Yok-Utian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utian</li> <li>▪ Costanoan</li> <li>▪ Southern</li> <li>▪ <b>Rumsen</b></li> </ul>
<b>Writing system</b>	Latin
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	(included in css ( <a href="http://www.ethnologue.com/language/css">http://www.ethnologue.com/language/css</a> ))
<b>Glottolog</b>	rums1243 ( <a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/rums1243">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/rums1243</a> ) <sup>[2]</sup>



Mission San Carlos Borroméo de Carmelo, where many Rumsen were brought to live in the Mission Era.

the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Awaswas Ohlone to the north, the Mutsun Ohlone to the east, the Chalon Ohlone on the south east, and the Esselen to the south.<sup>[3]</sup>

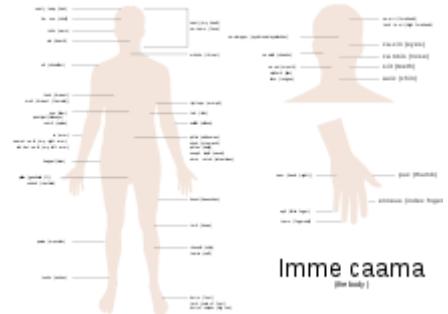
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## Phonology

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### Consonants

Myth of the Coyote in the Rumsen language recorded by Alfred L. Kroeber in 1902



Body parts in Rumsen

Consonant phonemes<sup>[4]</sup>

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Retroflex</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Nasal</u>	<u>m m</u>	<u>n n</u>				
<u>Plosive</u>	<u>p p</u>	<u>t t</u>	<u>t̪ t̪</u>		<u>k k</u>	<u>ʔ</u>
<u>Affricate</u>		<u>tʂ tʂ</u>		<u>tʃ tʃ</u>		
<u>Fricative</u>		<u>s s</u>	<u>s̪ s̪</u>	<u>f̪ f̪</u>	<u>x x</u>	
<u>Approximant</u>	<u>w w</u>	<u>l l</u>		<u>j y</u>		
<u>Rhotic</u>		<u>r r r r</u>				

Vowel phonemes<sup>[4]</sup>

	<u>Front</u>	<u>Back</u>
<u>Close</u>	<u>i i</u>	<u>u u</u>
<u>Mid</u>	<u>ɛ e</u>	<u>o o</u>
<u>Open</u>		<u>a a</u>

### See also

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- Ohlone tribes and villages in the Monterey Bay Area
- Abalone

### Notes

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1. Hinton 2001:430 [1] (<https://books.google.com/books?id=nq5dzUTSiBsC&pg=PA430>)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Rumsen" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/rums1243>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute

for the Science of Human History.

3. Milliken, Randall. 1987. *Ethnohistory of the Rumsen*. Papers in Northern California Anthropology No. 2. Salinas, CA: Coyote Press.
4. "John Peabody Harrington Papers" ([http://collections.si.edu/search/slideshow\\_embedded?xml=%22http://sirismm.si.edu/naa/viewer/Harrington\\_mf2\\_r36\\_Gallery/viewer\\_Harrington\\_mf2\\_r36.xml%22](http://collections.si.edu/search/slideshow_embedded?xml=%22http://sirismm.si.edu/naa/viewer/Harrington_mf2_r36_Gallery/viewer_Harrington_mf2_r36.xml%22)).

## References

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- Kroeber, Alfred L. 1925. *Handbook of the Indians of California*. Washington, D.C: Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin No. 78. (map of villages, page 465)
- Levy, Richard. 1978. Costanoan, in *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 8 (California). William C. Sturtevant, and Robert F. Heizer, eds. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1978. ISBN 0-16-004578-9 / 0160045754, pages 485–495.
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- Teixeira, Lauren. *The Costanoan/Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco and Monterey Bay Area, A Research Guide*. Menlo Park, CA: Ballena Press Publication, 1997. ISBN 0-87919-141-4.

## External links

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- Costanoan Rumsen Chino Tribe (<http://www.costanoanrumson.org/>)
- Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation Tribal Website (<http://www.ohlonecostanoanesselenation.org/>)
- "Rumsen / Southern Ohlone sound recordings" ([http://collections.si.edu/search/results.htm?date.slider=&date.slider=&fq=online\\_media\\_type%3A%22Sound+recordings%22&fq=online\\_visual\\_material%3Atrue&q=&q=%22Tubatulabal%22&q=%22Chumash%22&fq=language:%22Ohlone%2C+Southern%22](http://collections.si.edu/search/results.htm?date.slider=&date.slider=&fq=online_media_type%3A%22Sound+recordings%22&fq=online_visual_material%3Atrue&q=&q=%22Tubatulabal%22&q=%22Chumash%22&fq=language:%22Ohlone%2C+Southern%22)). Collections Search Center, Smithsonian Institution. Retrieved 2012-07-20.
- Spanish-Rumsen-Esselen Glossary (<https://archive.org/stream/relaciondelviage00espi#page/172/mode/2up>), 1802

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